



Ecclesiology

The Doctrine of the Church



The Doctrine of the Church

In a day when cheapening the Church seems all too common, let us give ourselves instead to _____ the Church.

Why should we cherish the Church?

1. Because we love the _____ of God. (Jn. 17:20-23)
2. Because we adore the Son of God. (Acts 20:28)
3. Because we treasure the _____ of God. (I Cor.3:16-17)
4. Because we value the gospel of God. (2 Tim.1:13-14)
5. Because we desire _____ from God. (Gen. 2:18)
6. Because we desire salvation for the lost. (Rev. 5:9-10)

We want to take a look at:

- Who is the Church?
 - We want to know God's definition of the Church.
- What does the Church do?
 - We want to follow God's design for the Church.
- How is the Church led?
 - We want clarity on the organization of the Church.
- Where is the Church going?
 - We want confidence in the future of the Church.

Who is the Church?

God's definition of His people

The Church is the body of people called by God's grace through faith in Christ to glorify Him by serving Him in this world.

I. The body of people...

A. The Church is a gathering.

"Ekklesia" – mentioned 114 x's in the New Testament (Heb. 2:12)

Twice in reference to an Old Testament assembly, three times in reference to a secular assembly and 109 times in reference to a Christian assembly.

The Church is a gathering of people God has called out and called together into an earthly assembly with a heavenly destiny.

B. The Church is _____. (I Peter 2:9-10)

1. The Church is a family. (Gal. 3:26)
2. The Church is a bride. (Eph. 5:25-27)
3. The Church is a building. (I Cor. 3:9)
4. The Church is a house. (Heb. 3:3-6)
5. The Church is a temple. (Eph. 2:19-22)
6. The Church is a field. (I Cor. 3:6-9)
7. The Church is a tree. (Rom. 11:17-24)
8. The Church is a priesthood. (I Peter 2:4-9)
9. The Church is a body. (Eph. 1:22-23)

II. "... Called by God's grace through faith in Christ..."

A. What we were in our sin:

1. We were _____. (Eph. 2:1-3)
2. We were living in darkness. (Jn. 3:20)
3. We were children of disobedience. (Rom. 5:12-14)
4. We were _____ to sin. (Rom. 6:16-17)
5. We were condemned to hell. (Jn. 3:18)

B. What God did by His grace: (Eph. 1:3-14)

1. The _____ planned our salvation.

2. The _____ purchased our salvation.
3. The _____ preserves our salvation.

C. What we are now as the Church: (Heb. 10:19-25)

4. We are recipients of a new covenant.

A Comparison of the Old and New Covenants

Old Covenant

The Command: Stay _____ in fear. (Ex. 19:16-22)

The Provision: An annual sacrifice on the Day of Atonement. (Lev. 16:29-30)

The Elements: A priest entering an earthly sanctuary and the blood of a spotless animal. (Lev. 16:3-4)

The Effect: A reminder of all our sin. (Heb. 10:3-4)

New Covenant

The Command: Draw _____ in faith. (Heb. 12:18-24)

The Provision: An abiding sacrifice in the death of Christ. (Heb. 10:10)

The Elements: A priest entering a heavenly sanctuary and the blood of a sinless man. (Heb. 9:13-14)

The Effect: The removal of all our sin. (Heb. 10:17-18)

D. What we are now as the Church (cont.)

1. We are members of a new community. (Heb. 10:22-25)

As members of a new community we draw near to God in faith together.

We come before Him with sincere desire.

We come before Him with confident assurance.

We come before Him with cleansed hearts.

We come before Him with purified bodies.

As members of a new community we hold firmly to God in hope together.

The barriers to our hope:

We will face _____.

We will face _____.

The basis of our hope:

The faithfulness of God to His promises. (Heb. 6:13-20)

The return of Christ for His people. (Heb. 9:27-28)

As members of a new community we motivate one another to love together. (Eph. 5:19-21)

We gather together regularly.

We encourage one another continually.

III. "... To glorify Him by serving Him in this world."

- A. The Church has been filled with the power of Christ. (Eph. 1:15-23)
 - 1. Christ has _____ authority. (Col. 1:19)
 - a. He is the risen Savior.
 - b. He is the exalted King.
 - c. He is the sovereign Lord.
- B. The Church has the _____ of Christ. (Col. 2:9-10)
 - 1. All the authority in all the earth belongs to the Church.
 - 2. We are now a display of the glory of Christ.

Description of the Church...

I. The Church is universal and _____.

- A. The Church in a house... (Rom. 16:5)
- B. The Church in a city... (I Cor. 1:2)
- C. The Church in a region... (Acts 9:31)
- E. The Church in the world...

II. The Church is both visible and invisible.

- A. The invisible Church: The Church as _____ sees it from heaven. (Includes all believers) (2 Tim.2:19)
- B. The visible Church: The Church as we see it on earth.
(Includes some false believers)

III. The Church includes both Jews and Gentiles.

IV. The Church is unified and diversified. (Jn. 17:21-23)

We work for unity in the local and the universal Church because division is both _____ and _____.

Devotion to the Church...

I. Is Church membership necessary?

- A. Membership in a local church is _____ biblically commanded.
- B. Membership in a local church is biblically _____. (I Cor. 12:21-26)
- C. Membership is implied by church gatherings. (I Cor. 16:19)
- D. Membership is implied by church discipline. (Mt. 18:15-17)
- E. Membership is implied by church leadership. (I Peter 5:2-3)
- F. Membership is implied by church accountability.
 - 1. The church is accountable for choosing _____. (Acts 6:2-6)
 - 2. The church is accountable for preaching the gospel. (Gal. 1:6-9)
 - 3. The church is accountable for indentifying members. (I Cor. 5:12-13)
 - 4. The church is accountable for _____ missionaries. (Acts 13:1-3)

II. Is a church covenant valuable?

- A. A covenant defined: A written agreement or promise usually under seal between two or more parties especially for the performance of some action.
- B. A church covenant defined: A clear expression of a church's commitment to love one another and obey Scripture together as a *community* of faith. (Neh. 9:38)
 - 1. The church is a community grounded in the Word. (Neh. 8:1-6)
 - 2. The church is a community sustained by the grace of God. (Neh. 9:32-33)
 - 3. The church is a community promoting the good of one another. (Neh. 10:28-30)
 - 4. The church is a community demonstrating the glory of God. (Neh. 12:43)

Summary of the Church...

- What is the Church?

The Church is the body of people called by God's grace through faith in Christ to glorify Him by serving Him in this world.

- What is a local church?

The local church is a local body of believers in Christ, covenanted together to glorify God by serving Him in this world.

- Christians and local churches...

As followers of Christ, we commit our lives to one another as members of local churches...

For the good of ourselves.

For the good of other Christians.

For the good of non-Christians.

For the glory of God.

What does the Church do?

God's design for His people

Seven Activities of the Church:

- The Church evangelizes.
- The Church baptizes.
- The Church teaches.
- The Church nurtures.
- The Church worships.
- The Church prays.
- The Church multiplies.

I. **The Church evangelizes. (Acts 1:3-11)**

A. The Church beholds the glory of Christ.

1. He is the risen Savior.
2. He is the exalted Lord.
3. He is the coming King.

B. The Church _____ the gospel of Christ. (Acts 1:8)

C. The Church proclaims the gospel in the power of Jesus' _____. (Lk. 24:46-49)

1. He is with us. (Mt. 28:20)
2. He dwells in us. (Jn. 14:12)
3. He enables our obedience. (Ez. 36:26-27)
4. He empowers our proclamation.

Gospel Threads...

The Character of God.

The sinfulness of man.

The sufficiency of Christ.

The necessity of faith.

The urgency of eternity.

D. The Church proclaims the gospel in light of Jesus' _____.

1. We are worshipers.
2. We are witnesses.

E. The Church proclaims the gospel in obedience to Jesus' _____. (Acts 1:8)

II. The Church baptizes. (Acts 2:41)

A. We are recipients of a new _____.

1. Baptism is a declaration that we belong to Jesus.

B. We are members of a new _____.

1. Baptism is a declaration that we belong to each other.

C. The Questions about baptism

1. Why are Christians baptized?

- a. We follow the example of Christ. (Mt. 3:13-17)
- b. We obey the command of Christ. (Mt. 29:19)
- c. We unite the body of Christ. (I Cor. 12:12-13)

2. What is the meaning of baptism?

- a. A celebration of the grace of Christ. (Rom. 6:1-4)
- b. He died on a cross as our substitute.
- c. He rose from the grave as our Savior.

3. An illustration of the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 6:5-10)

- a. Into the water= Identification with His death.
- b. Out of the water= Participation in His resurrection.

4. A proclamation of the glory of Christ. (Col. 2:11-15)

- a. In the Church.
- b. Beyond the Church.

5. How are Christians baptized?

- a. The Biblical mode of baptism is immersion.
 1. The precedent of Christ. (Mark 1:9-11)
 2. The pattern of early church leaders. (Acts 8:36-39)
 3. The picture of the gospel. (Rom. 6:4)

6. Who should be baptized?
 - a. Everyone who has been born again. (Col. 2:11-12)
 - b. Spiritual regeneration precedes physical immersion.
 - c. External demonstration follows internal transformation.
7. When should they be baptized?
 - a. As soon as possible following conversion. (Acts 8:12-13)
 - b. As soon as they can most wisely testify to their salvation.

III. The Church teaches. (Acts 2:42)

- A. The Church is a community formed by God's Word.
 1. We are _____ by God's Word. (Rom. 10:17)
 2. We are _____ by God's Word. (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
 3. We are _____ of God's Word. (2 Tim. 4:1-5)
- B. The Church is a community focused on God's Word.
 1. The Church _____ the magnitude of God's Word.
 - a. The Church knows the significance of God's revelation.
 1. God reveals Himself as the Word. (Jn. 1:1)
 2. God reveals Himself through the Word.
 - Creation is formed by His Word. (Heb. 11:3)
 - Storms are stilled by His Word. (Mark 4:39)
 - Fevers are cooled by His Word. (Lk. 4:39)
 - Demons are cast out by His Word. (Mark 1:25)
 - Sins are forgiven by His Word. (Mark 2:5)
 - The blind are made to see by His Word. (Luke 18:42)
 - The dead are raised to life by His Word. (Jn. 11:43-44)
 - The entire universe responds to His Word. (Is. 40:25-26)
 - b. The Church knows the seriousness of man's proclamation. (2 Cor. 4:4-6)
 1. The preacher exposes the voice of God. (Ez. 11:5)
 2. The preacher _____ the greatness of God. (Neh. 8:5-6)
 2. The Church _____ the authority of God's Word.
 - a. Apart from the Word the preacher is helpless.
 - b. Apart from the Word the church is powerless. (Prov. 29:18)
 3. The Church _____ the relevance of God's Word.
 - a. The Word speaks to contemporary needs.
 - b. The Word speaks with eternal promises.
 - Promises of success. (Josh. 1:8-9)
 - Promises of blessing. (Ps. 19:7-11)
 - Promises to guide. (Ps. 119:105)
 - Promises to comfort. (Is. 40:1-2)
 - Promises of peace. (Philippians 4:4-7)
 - Promises of wisdom. (2 Tim. 3:14-17)

- Promises of salvation. (Rom. 10:17)
- Promises of satisfaction. (I Peter 2:2)

4. The Church _____ the purpose of God's Word.

a. God's agenda in Scripture

- To tell us about the glory of Christ.
- To transform us into the image of Christ. (2 Cor. 3:18)

b. The focus in the church's worship: Human tips or Divine text?

- When we focus on human tips instead of the Divine text we rob ourselves of the truth that is necessary for realizing God's purpose for our lives.
- When we focus on human tips instead of the Divine text we rob God of the glory that is due His name.
- When we focus on the Divine text instead of human tips we fill ourselves with the truth that is necessary for realizing God's purpose in our lives.
- When we focus on the Divine text instead of human tips we glorify God by becoming like Christ.
 - The Word feeds the _____ of Christ in us. (Jn. 15:5-7)
 - The Word instills the _____ of Christ in us. (2 Cor. 10:3-5)
 - The Word produces the _____ of Christ in us. (James 1:22-25)

5. The Church _____ the effect of God's Word.

a. The Word elicits conviction. (Acts 2:37)

- People realize the gravity of their need.
- People realize the greatness of God's provision.

b. The Word explains conversion. (Acts 2:38)

- Repentance: We turn...
 - From our sin.
 - From ourselves.
- Belief: We trust in Christ.
 - As the risen Savior.
 - As the reigning Lord.

c. The Word establishes a craving. (I Peter 2:1-3)

- We long to be fed by the Word of God.
- We long to be led by the Spirit of God.

IV. The Church nurtures. (Acts 2:42)

- A. Our common spiritual _____. (Acts 4:32)
 - 1. We share in the body and blood of Christ. (I Cor. 10:16)
 - 2. We share in the Spirit of Christ. (2 Cor. 13:14)
 - 3. We share in the gospel of Christ. (Philippians 1:5)
 - 4. We share in the sufferings of Christ. (Philippians 3:10)
 - 5. We share in the life of Christ. (I Jn. 1:3-7)

- B. Our common social _____. (Acts 2:43-47)
 - 1. We care for one another.
 - a. We receive mercy from God.
 - b. We reflect mercy toward one another.
 - We love one another.
 - We host one another.
 - We greet one another.
 - We receive one another.
 - We honor one another.
 - We serve one another.
 - We instruct one another.
 - We wait for one another.
 - We forgive one another.
 - We submit to one another.
 - We spur on one another.
 - We build peace with one another.
 - We bear one another's burdens.
 - We encourage one another.
 - We comfort one another.
 - We pray for one another.
 - We confess to one another.
 - We esteem one another.
 - We edify one another.
 - We teach one another.
 - We are kind to one another.

The joy among the family reflects the glory of the Father.

- 2. We serve one another. (Rom. 12:3-8)
 - a. We are a family _____ by grace. (I Peter 4:10)
 - b. We are a family _____ by gifts. (I Cor. 12:15-26)
 - Everyone counts.
 - No one is superior.
 - No one is inferior.
 - We don't compare.
 - We don't copy.
 - Everyone contributes.

3. We give to one another. (Acts 2:45)
 - a. We give out of abundance of grace.
 - We give willingly.
 - We give generously.
 - We give cheerfully.
 - We give regularly.
 - We give as a demonstration of the Gospel.
 - We Give to promote thanksgiving to God.
 - ❖ We give to exalt the goodness of God.
4. We restore one another. (Gal. 6:1-5)
 - a. Why not church discipline?
 - "It's legalistic."
 - ❖ The truth is: It is _____. (Heb. 12:6)
 - "What about Mt. 7:1?"
 - ❖ Keep going to Mt. 7:5.
 - "People will leave the church."
 - ❖ This is _____ church to grow not ours. (Acts 5:1-14)
 - "The church doesn't know how to practice church discipline."
 - ❖ Then the church needs to learn how.
 - b. What is church discipline?
 - Formative discipline is the _____ training believers receive from the Word of God in the body of Christ as their lives are transformed into Christlikeness.
 - Restorative discipline is the _____ care taken by the body of Christ in matters of unrepentant sin in a professed brother or sister's life.
 - c. Approaching church discipline (Mt. 18:4)
 - We need childlike humility.
 - We need a deep concern for holiness.
 - We need compassion for the hurting.
 - We need _____ hearts.
 - d. Applying church discipline (Mt. 18:15-20)
 - Step one: Private correction.
 - Step two: Small group clarification.
 - Step three: Church admonition.
 - Step four: Church excommunication

e. Why church discipline

- For the _____ of the Church (2 Thess.3:14-15)
 - ❖ Church members are accountable...
 - ❖ Before God
 - ❖ For each other

 - ❖ Church members must be humble...
 - ❖ Pride: Toleration of unrepentant sinners in the church.
 - ❖ Humility: Exclusion of unrepentant sinners in the church.

 - ❖ Church membership is essential...
 - ❖ The church defines who is a member.
 - ❖ Isolation from the church reflects separation from Christ.
- For the _____ of the individual
- For the _____ of God. (Ez. 36:22-23)

f. Church discipline in action

- Obey with the love of Christ.
 - Be humble. (Prov. 19:11)
 - Be Biblical. (Titus 3:9)
 - ❖ Is there a sin that is dishonoring God?
 - ❖ Is there a sin that is damaging the Gospel?
 - ❖ Is there a sin that is hurting the unity of the church?
 - ❖ Is there a sin that is hurting the witness of the church?

 - Be pure. (Mt. 7:5)
 - ❖ Examine your life.
 - ❖ Examine your motives.

 - Be prayerful. (2 Tim. 2:25-26)
 - Be quiet. (Eph. 4:29)
 - Be quick. (Mt. 5:23-24)
 - Be gentle.
 - Be careful.
 - Be intentional.
- Trust in the authority of Christ. (Mt. 18:18)
- Pray according to the promise of Christ. (Mt. 18:19)
- Expect the promise of Christ. (Mt. 18:20)
- Honor the cross of Christ.
 - We want a Christ who pardons but do we want a Christ who purifies?
 - When we tolerate sin in the church we trample of the sacrifice of Christ.
 - The death of Christ on the cross transforms our lives in the church.

V. The Church Worships (Acts 2:42)

A. Worship in the church is the activity of glorifying God in His presence with our voices and hearts.

B. Foundational Components of the Church's Worship

1. The Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:23-32)
 - a. Baptism demonstrates our initial identification with Christ and His Church.
 - b. The Lord's Supper celebrates our _____ identification with Christ and His Church.
2. Who should participate in the Lord's Supper?
 - a. Believers share in the work of Christ as they partake of the Lord's Supper.
 - b. Unbelievers see the work of Christ as they watch the Lord's Supper.
3. When should we have the Lord's Supper?
 - a. The command: Observe it often.
 - b. The question: What about weekly?
4. How should we understand the Lord's Supper?
 - a. A traditional misunderstanding: A change of substance that results in salvation.
 - b. A biblical understanding: A symbolic meal that reflects salvation.
5. Why should we celebrate the Lord's Supper?
 - a. To remember the body of Jesus.
 - b. To remember the blood of Jesus.
 - c. To reflect on our sin.
 - d. To reflect on His promises.
 - e. To renew our commitment to Christ.
 - f. To renew our commitment to each other.
 - g. To rejoice that Christ has set us free.
 - h. To rejoice that Christ is coming back.

C. Fundamental values in the Church's Worship

1. Humility (Rev. 19:1-10)
 - a. The greatness of God holds our attention, incites our affection, and leads us to humble adoration of God in worship.
 - b. God _____ our worship and orchestrates history to display His glory and ordains the church to enjoy His glory.
 - c. God _____ worship.
 - He is Savior.
 - He is glorious.
 - He is omnipotent.
 - He is true.
 - He is just.
 - He is eternal.
 - He is mighty.
 - He is sovereign.
 - He is holy.

- d. God _____ us to Himself in worship.
- Beware of the pitfalls of man-centered worship:
 - Misplaced devotion
 - Misdirected motives
 - Misunderstood success
 - Believe in the power of God-centered worship.
 - God the Father seeks us for worship. (Jn.4: 23-24)
 - God the Son enables us to worship.
 - God the Spirit directs us in worship.

2. Community

- a. The church gathers together for the purpose of corporate worship.
- b. We celebrate with one another. (Neh. 12:27-30)
- Corporate worship is the public enjoyment of who God is.
 - Corporate worship is the public thanksgiving for all God has done.
- c. We participate with one another.
- We _____ individualistic attitudes.
 - We spurn spectator approaches.
- d. We _____ one another. (Col. 3:16-17)
- e. We express our unity. (Neh. 8:1)
- f. We establish continuity with the Church throughout history. (Neh. 12:45-46)
- g. We _____ together in spiritual battle. (Acts 16:25-26)

3. Clarity

- a. The church's worship involves a rhythm of revelation and response.
- b. God's revelation...
- He reveals Himself clearly in the _____. (Ps. 19:1-4)
 - He reveals Himself comprehensively in the _____. (Ps. 19:7-11)
 - The Word is complete.
 - The Word is relevant.
 - The Word is good.
 - The Word is clear.
 - The Word is eternal.
 - The Word is true.
- c. The church's response
- The Word transforms us.
 - The Word makes us wise.
 - The Word satisfies us.
 - The Word enlightens us.
 - The Word awes us.
 - The Word makes us righteous.

d. When the Word is absent in our worship

- Our response is manufactured.
- The result is pleasing to _____ rather than to God.

e. When the Word is apparent in our worship...

- Our response is authentic
- The result is pleasing to _____.

4. Honesty (Jn. 4:21-24)

- a. The church's worship requires honesty before God and each other.
- b. We cannot worship without being honest with God.
- c. We cannot limit worship to a certain place.
- d. We cannot worship a God we do not know.

5. Diversity (Rev. 7:9-17)

- a. The church's worship reflects the unity and diversity of _____.
 - We need to get in on a global perspective of worship.
 - We need to get over the different styles of worship that divide Christians in the church.
 - We need to get involved in the joy of continual, worldwide worship.
 - We need to get lost in the love God has for each of us.
 - We need to get on with the global mission God has called us to.

VI. The Church Prays (Acts 2:42)

A. Who does the church pray to?

1. The God who is sovereign over everything in the world. (Ps. 24:1)
2. The God who _____ everything we need. (Acts 17:25)

B. Why does the church pray?

1. We are utterly dependent on God's power.
2. We are utterly _____ for God's grace.
3. We must be utterly devoted to God's mission.

C. How does the church pray?

1. With structure.
2. With spontaneity.

D. When does the church pray?

1. In times of concentrated prayer.
2. In times of continual prayer.

E. Where does the church pray?

1. We gather to pray.
2. We _____ to pray.

- F. What does the church pray for?
1. For the success of God's Word.
 2. For the needs of each other and the world.
 3. For the spread of God's worship.

VII. The Church Multiplies (Acts 2:47)

- A. Unifying and Expanding
1. True biblical community is inseparable from evangelism in the church.
 2. True biblical evangelism is inseparable from community in the church.
- B. Quantitative Growth and Qualitative Growth
1. One question in the church: How _____ people are coming?
 2. Another question in the church: What _____ of people are we producing?
- C. Worshiping and Witnessing
1. The church unifies through our worship.
 2. The church multiplies through our witness.
 3. Our worship is empty if it is _____ from expression in the world. (Acts 13:1-4)
- D. Gathered and Scattered
1. Dangerous Misunderstandings:
 - a. The church views leaders as professional performers and members as amateur spectators.
 - b. The church measures success more by what happens when we come in than by what happens when we go out.
 2. A Biblical Understanding:
 - a. The church gathers together to train one another in the Gospel.
 - b. The church scatters apart to penetrate the world with the Gospel.
- E. Local and Global (Acts 1:8)
1. A Dangerous Approach
 - a. "But I am not called to foreign missions."
 - Reflects an unbiblical understanding of salvation.
 - b. "Wouldn't it be better for me to give than to go?"
 - Reflects an unbiblical understanding of the Gospel.
 2. A Dynamic Alternative
 - a. World-impacting disciples
 - b. Ever-multiplying churches

How Is The Church Led

The Organization of The Church

I. Organization of the Church

- A. The church is an organism and an organization.
- B. The church is an institution comprised of individuals.
- C. Christ is the Lord of the church. (Col. 2:19)
 - 1. He gives elders to the church who are servant leaders in the church.
 - 2. He gives deacons to the church who are leading servants in the church.

II. Elders: Servant Leaders in the Church (Acts 20:28-31, I Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, I Peter 5:1-4)

- A. The church chooses and follows elders as servant leaders who are wholeheartedly committed to accomplishing the mission of Christ.
 - 1. Elder, pastor, and overseer are interchangeable terms and titles.
 - 2. The New Testament pattern is a _____ of elders in the church.
- B. Four responsibilities of Elders
 - 1. Elders _____ under the authority of Christ.
 - a. Elders belong to the church.
 - Elders are raised up by the Spirit of God.
 - b. The church belongs to Christ
 - Elders are responsible to the Son of God.
 - 2. Elders _____ for the body of Christ.
 - a. Elders protect the flock.
 - b. Elders nurture the flock.
 - 3. Elders _____ the Word of Christ (I Tim. 5:17)
 - a. Elders know the Word extensively.
 - b. Elders communicate the Word effectively.
 - 4. Elders _____ the character of Christ.
 - a. The primary question: What will happen if the church imitates this leader?
 - b. In his personal life...
 - Is he self-controlled?
 - Is he wise?
 - Is he peaceable?
 - Is he gentle?
 - Is he a sacrificial giver?
 - Is he humble?
 - Is he patient?
 - Is he honest?
 - Is he disciplined?

- c. In his family life...
 - Is he the elder in his home?
 - If he is single, is he self-controlled?
 - If he is married, is he completely committed to his wife?
 - If he has children, do they honor him?
- d. In his social/business life...
 - Is he kind?
 - Is he hospitable?
 - Is he a friend of strangers?
 - Does he show favoritism?
 - Does he have a blameless reputation?
- e. In his spiritual life...
 - Is he making disciples of all nations?
 - Does he love the Word?
 - Is he a man of prayer?
 - Is he holy?
 - Is he gracious?

III. Deacons: Leading Servants in the Church (Acts 6:1-7)

- A. The church affirms and honors deacons as leading servants who use their gifts to build up the body of Christ.
- B. Three responsibilities of a deacon:
 - 1. Deacons meet needs according to the Word
 - a. Arise from specific circumstances.
 - b. Accountable for specific commands.
 - 2. Deacons _____ the ministry of the Word.
 - a. Deacons serve elders so they can lead.
 - b. Deacons lead others so they can serve.
 - 3. Deacons _____ the body around the Word.
 - a. Qualifications:
 - A mission mindset
 - A Christlike character
 - b. Questions:
 - Is the person honorable?
 - Is this person genuine?
 - Is this person self-controlled?

- Is this person a sacrificial giver?
- Is this person devoted to the Word?
- Is this person faithful?
- Is this person blameless?
- Is this person honoring Christ in the home?
- What about women?
 - Consider the translation.
 - Consider the transition.
 - Consider the elders' wives.
 - Consider the Phoebe factor.

How It All Works

I. Every member of the church is a minister of the gospel. (Eph. 4:11-16)

II. Leaders serve the members. (Heb. 13:17)

- A. Their authority is conditional.
 - 1. They must teach the Word _____. (I Tim. 5:17)
 - 2. They must live the Word _____. (I Cor. 11:1)
- B. Their accountability is serious.
 - 1. They serve carefully.
 - 2. They serve responsibly.
 - 3. They serve joyfully.

III. The members submit to leaders.

- A. Members _____ the Word that leaders teach.
 - 1. Members are under the authority of Christ.
 - 2. Members are ultimately accountable to Christ.
 - a. In matters of dispute
 - b. In matters of doctrine
 - c. In matters of discipline
- B. Members imitate the faith that leaders have.
- C. Members maximize the joy that leaders experience.

IV. When leaders serve members and members submit to leaders...

- A. The church is _____.
- B. Christ is _____.

Where is the Church Going?

The Future of the Church

As the people of God called by God's grace through faith in Christ to glorify Him by serving Him this world...

- I. Let us lean on the _____ of the Lord (Ex. 34:6-7)**
 - A. God has always been gracious to His people.
 - B. God has always been sufficient for His people.
 - C. His purposes will triumph.
 - D. His promises will prove true.

- II. Let us learn from those who have gone _____ us. (Heb. 11:8)**
 - A. They knew that God's call on their lives was only due to God's grace in their hearts.
 - B. They were not afraid to leave the familiar for the unknown.
 - C. They were clearly out of place in this world.
 - D. They patiently trusted in the promises of God.
 - E. They believed that God could accomplish the impossible.
 - F. Their lives counted on earth because their eyes were fixed on heaven.
 - G. Their radical faith led to real sacrifice.
 - H. They were willing to die living by faith.

- III. Let us live for those who will come _____ us. (Ps. 78:1-8)**
- IV. Let's share the Word with others so they will receive it. (Acts 17:1-4)**
- V. Let's show the Word to others so they will model it. (1 Thes. 2:17-20)**
- VI. Let's teach the Word to others so they will _____ it. (2 Tim. 2:1-2)**
- VII. Let's _____ for the end of the world. (Mt. 24:14)**
 - A. God's purpose for the church is clear.
 - 1. Over 11,000 people groups in the world.
 - 2. Over 6,000 people groups still not reached with the gospel.
 - B. God's plan for the church is costly.
 - C. God's promise to the church is coming.
 - 1. He will return for His church.
 - 2. We will reign in His Kingdom
 - 3. We will rejoice forever in our God.